[Banana] Village]

When the water boils, the woman of the house puts a handful of maté leaves into a special maté calabash and pours the boiling water over the leaves. Every one, starting with the father, then sucks maté through a tube, the calabash being passed from hand to hand until all have had enough. The tube may be of cane or if the family has enough money it may even be of metal. A decorated silver tube is a luxury which few Terena can afford. After drinking maté the people eat whatever is left over from the last evening's meal, such as boiled sweetpotatoes, meat mixed with manioc meal, or whatever fruit may be available.

After breakfast the men take their tools and go to work, either to their fields or to their carpentry or building. Unless field work is urgent the women and children remain at home, the women preparing manioc meal, sewing, washing clothes, and preparing the noonday meal. Right after breakfast the women go to the wells in the village to draw water. They fill their water pots and carry them to their houses on their heads. Often many women meet at a well, each taking her turn at drawing water with a metal bucket attached to a rope. In the meantime, the other women are engaged in conversation, usually amid peals of laughter.

When the sun reaches the zenith, the men return to their houses where the women have prepared a meal of beans, manioc, and dried meat. Each one fills his dish from the cooking pots and sits apart to eat, sometimes sitting on a low stool but usually squatting on the ground. Mothers provide the food for the younger children. Maté is drunk after the meal. Eating is a private act, while drinking maté from a common calabash brings everyone together. The Terena consider maté drinking an important social activity. After eating, both men and women lie in hammocks to rest. Around 2 or 3 o'clock they arise to return to work. In order to prevent the siesta from becoming too long the Post manager rings a bell sometime between 2 and 3 o'clock.

Near sunset the men return home, rest awhile, drink maté, wash themselves, and put on clean clothing. The wives then call the men for the evening meal, which usually consists of beans, rice, manioc, and perhaps some kind of meat. Sometimes the people eat "rapadura" or perhaps sirup with manioc meal before drinking more maté.

[P.27-A]

/43 cont./ [Traditional Culture]

121 result in a condition of dependency." (Max Schmidt, 1917, Ch. III.)

177 This ethnic
178 stratification must have been succeeded by a social stratifica-
565 tion, which seems to have resulted from contact with Chaco groups, especially the Mbayá-Guaikurú. No matter what its origin may have been, the fact is that this social stratification became an element of dynamization of the original structure.

[648] We can raise the hypothesis that as a result of the symbiotic character of Guaná-Mbayá relations, the relatives of the Guaná caciques may have endeavored to adopt the behavior patterns of their Mbayá-Guaikurú allies, because these patterns
177 were expressions of a higher "status." The Mbayá-Guaikurú
178 not being tillers of the soil--but rather gatherers and hunters
565 and, lately, herders--, they left to their captives the agri-
461 cultural work which contributed to the stigmatization of farm work, the foundation on which Guaná society rested. And let it be said that this stigmatization is fully documented in the
178 chronicle on those Indians. Furthermore, our hypothesis seems
565 to be confirmed by the existence of certain modalities of
462 conduct that live on in the Terêna communities of a more
[171] archaic character. In Cachoeirinha, for example, we observed that the women from traditional families, i.e., those remaining from the old local group, do not approve of women working on the land, a fact which is "sui generis" since it is regarded as a commonplace in Aruák cultures that the woman should assist the man in agricultural work: on him devolve the felling of the forest and clearing of the land, and on her the /44/ planting, upkeep, and harvest. (67) The division of labor

171 67. Among the western Txané
462 who live in a symbiotic relation-
177 ship with the Xiriguano, also an agricultural (Tupi) people, the

648 /102 cont./ This labor is ordinarily carried out by the
621 Indians themselves, who are paid especially for this, but this
433 does not exclude the hiring of a "Purutuya," nearly always in
[464] the capacity of a post employee. The superintendents explain
[465] that this production reverts to the benefit of the post and the
aldea, while part of it is also laid aside for those families
whose heads, for reasons of illness, are unable to support them. (160)

160. This expressed a wish on the part of the officials rather than reality. In the first place, because production, with rare exceptions, was relatively insignificant, often almost nonexistent; in the second place, because the income resulting from production was not always put to use in the aldea or post itself, but channeled to Rio de Janeiro, where it was deposited as native revenue, to be applied to Indian assistance generally, at the discretion of the S. P. I. Diretoria. For these reasons, the Indian never participated in this work with enthusiasm, since he only rarely benefited from the revenue obtained by the post.

● [461]

184 There are posts, for example, which are characterized
621 by possessing good herds of cattle, such as Lalima, Buriti,
433 and Brejão, whereas others have an agriculturally oriented economy, with their plots of rice, cane, and manioc, and recent experiments with small coffee plantations. Cachoeirinha can be taken as the most representative of this latter type.

/139 cont./ There is no doubt that the
66 gradual political awakening of the Terêna has been an incentive
*177 to assimilation, by contributing to the intensification of inter-
648 ethnic relations with a clearly defined objective, such as playing a role in "Purutuya" politics, i.e., to obtain symmetrical relations, or, in some cases, such as that of the urbanized Indians, to fight for the rights of the class to which they belong. For this reason, we can regard the activity of the political parties, directly or indirectly, as a convergent factor of the greatest importance in the process of assimilation.

*177 6. With the exception of the factors noted in the first
557 two paragraphs (1 and 2), in which we dealt with the attraction the cities exercise on the Terêna, and of military service as the source of new experiences and advantages to the young Indian man, the other factors operate exclusively on the plane of acculturation, not exercising any appreciable influence on social mobility. The case of the councilman mentioned above, in perspective, does not permit us to judge the importance of the increase in political awareness on this last-mentioned plane, since his case seems to be the only one with which we are acquainted up to now. There is no case of spatial mobility or of social climbing through political mechanisms. The factor
[464] that plays the most significant part in the occurrence of social mobility is the labor market. In it, as has already been mentioned several times, the Terêna hold an important place from various standpoints.

*177 These Indians made up the basic labor force, for a long
464 time, /140/ on the fazendas that formed in southern Mato Grosso, especially in the proximities of the region they occupied.
[178] With the railroad and the resulting population growth in the southern part of the state, their importance naturally decreased, but they did not cease to be recruited for agricultural work, herding, and especially, the extraction of timber and angico bark, and the retention of their place on the regional labor
[461] market was thus assured. Among these varieties of work, they
[145] have no peers in the extractive tasks, for which they have

/140 cont./

developed a superior technique, in combination with the great endurance which they show in a most arduous form of labor. It is general knowledge in Mato Grosso that there is no better casqueiro /"bark stripper"/ than the Terêna. At a "round table" we held in Duque Estrada, in 1955, we had the opportunity to hear the testimonies of three fazendeiros, who were unanimously favorable to the Indian as a laborer, in spite of the fact that at first they tried to disparage him, only changing their attitude and giving up the stereotypes after an intensive discussion among them which we stimulated. They finally agreed that the Terêna is the /basic/ regional manual laborer, and even the manual laborer in highest demand: "He works well, lives on little, and is very obedient."

The extraction of angico bark or, simply, of timber, seem to be preferential productive activities of the aldea Terêna, with the exception, of course, of work on their own farm plots. In 1957 the leader of a work gang could earn 80 cruzeiros a day, and the men under him 65 cruzeiros. Such undertakings do not bring them as much as it might seem, because expenses are very high: food, clothing, and work tools; aside from this, the days when they are away from their families--from about one week to one month--are regarded as very tough: the sleeping arrangements are worse, they have no women, the food is bad, and the money they bring back does not make up for it....But even so, they prefer to wander from fazenda to fazenda, i.e., changuear, always returning to the aldea, to leaving it and settling with their family in some "colônia." The work pattern of most of these Indians is a combination of the changa, i.e., sporadic work for masters, with planting on their own "lots," in the aldea.

The nonmanual labor in the city, or the craft work in the country, for the aldea Indian, represents a "saving of the body," and thus /141/ an incentive to giving up the traditional production activities. Let us take, as an illustration, the case of the Indian, Arlindo: this Terêna, a young man of 28, had begun work in the bakery trade in the city of Aquidauana,

/141 cont./

159 where he went to live with his wife and a small child, leaving
*177 his own community, Cachoeirinha, "to try it out." He lived
256 in the boss's house, next to the bakery, and his wife worked
46 in the same house as a domestic servant. He says that in spite
[162] of the fact that the mistress--the boss's wife--was very ill-tempered with the bakery employees, he was sticking it out and would not leave of his own free will. "He was already carving the bread, and shortly he would no longer be an assistant! As a baker," he stated with some vehemence, "he would end up earning 2,500 cruzeiros, and if he got to be a 'master,' he could earn 7,500 cruzeiros!" According to what he told us, it could not be said that his work (at least as a baker's assistant) was much better than what he might have achieved in the aldea or on the fazendas; he worked from 10 p.m. until noon the next day; he rested about four hours and took up his work, making flour until 8 p.m., when he had dinner, and at 10 p.m. he went on to make bread again.
[824] This was his daily routine. And in spite of this, he pondered: "The only bad thing was the pain in the eyes (due to the flour, the dust, or the weak light) and the sleepiness; the body did not tire much, as happens in agricultural work; but, the most
826 important thing was that it was not worn down!" This concern
● 461 with saving the body, we were able to ascertain, was common to most of the Terena with whom we spoke. One of them, for example, explained to us that he had given up work "beating" coffee, because his arms and his lungs could no longer take
183 it.... The tendency for young men, as they themselves say,
463 "is to find a trade (such as baker, wood furniture maker, etc.) or to set up a 'bolicho' and earn money in the shade." We shall see below why this is no more than a rarely achieved expectation, as is well illustrated by Arlindo himself, who is now "changueando" and trying to set up his own farm plot on the family "lot."

821 This concern with the body--which we do not claim to
*177 be peculiar to the Indian--is one of the factors that have operated
463
558

/144 cont./

*177 191 369 561 i.e., among the urbanized Terêna, the knowledge of the Terêna language is rarer among the new generations and more common among the old people (emigrated from aldeas). But in the cities,

*177 191 142 There is no need to emphasize the importance of the Terêna language and the Mongoloid phenotype as factors that help to hinder assimilation, since they are characterized as "racial marks."

*177 212 464 2. There are other factors, however, that act in a divergent way in the assimilation process, while hindering the attainment by the Terêna of better-paid and more stable jobs. Such is the lack of documents, already mentioned earlier, when we [465] discussed the reservist's card. The "passes" supplied by the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios are not accepted by employers or, at best, are only partially accepted, i.e., the bosses, claiming that the "passes" do not have the same value as the work card (to get which it is necessary to have a birth certificate from the registry office), or, at least, the reservist's card, end up by rationalizing the low wages they pay. The interviews we carried out, however, show that there is already an awareness among the Terêna of the fact that it is indispensable to possess some identification, especially a work card, without [369] which they cannot obtain better jobs. Although it is the Indians living in the cities who feel the lack of identification most acutely, those living in aldeas are already beginning to see how necessary this is, especially those who live in communities close to the urban centers (such as Aldeinha, Passarinho, Moreira, and Cachoeirinha).

*177 ● 461 369 511 While the craft, industrial, or merely urban occupations (public sanitation, school and movie employees, servants, etc.) exercise a great attraction for the Terêna, it must be said that once their objectives are realized, it is common for them to feel dislocated in the new occupation, to the extent that they return to the aldea to work on their farm plots, even if this results in lowering their standard of living. Even those Terêna who have reasonably good jobs in the cities and who enjoy a

/144 cont./

*177 standard of living far superior to the best in the aldea, when
461 they do not return to /145/ it, keep lamenting the fact that
369 they are not doing agricultural work. This is a significant
[511] point, for it shows the vigor with which the culture imprints in the individual certain patterns which he gives up only with
[62] great difficulty, and under unusual circumstances. Agricultural work is so deeply rooted in the behavior of the ordinary Terêna, that this has hindered his "definitive" settlement in the city. This attachment to farm work may be regarded as a second factor, of an economic or productive order, which, hindering the permanent settlement of the Indian in the cities, obliterates
184 one of the roads to assimilation: that of urbanization. Of
*177 course, this is not true of the detribalized Terêna--who work
461 and live on the fazendas--since on the one hand they do not
162 need documents, and on the other hand they continue to perform agricultural work; the mechanisms that operate in such a context are of another order, and, probably, even, more
[128] effective in the process of assimilation. The lack of detailed information regarding this "fazenda" population that would permit us to infer with the same degree of probability the nature of the "assimilating" mechanisms, as we did in relation to the aldea Terêna and the urbanized Terêna, leads us merely to indicate that the Indians in that ("fazenda") category, more than those in the other categories (aldea and urbanized) are farther along the road to assimilation, either because of their detribalized condition or because they remain in rural contexts, whose "cultural distance" in relation to aldea life is much less than that between the latter and urban life.

*177 3. The Serviço de Proteção aos Índios will be dealt with
648 in this paragraph as a divergent factor in the assimilation
175 process. As we already mentioned in various parts of this work, it was thanks to the protective action of the S. P. I. that the Terêna population (to deal with it alone) managed to survive the impact of Brazilian society, represented historically by its pastoral side. The creation of the native reservations created

/39 cont./

842 There is no rule as to whether births of boys are preferred to births of girls or vice versa; such a preference depends on individual taste.

584 If a boy is courting a girl, he makes a speech to her, which one can translate approximately as follows: "I wish, I love this woman, I would like to be married, I wish, I wish, I love." -- If the girl is in agreement with him, she declares, short and sweet: "I want to." -- Then the mother of the boy goes to the mother of the girl to ask for her, and the father of the boy goes to the father of the girl. The boy gives his parents-in-laws gifts, 836 and they respond with gifts. Pre-marital sexual intercourse does 585 not take place. When the marriage is to be consumated, the 833 future husband hears from his father, and the future wife from her mother, that for coitus one should lie on the side, and, indeed, /40/ facing each other. "First you must do it that way for it has been done that way since the beginning of the tribes; later you may do it as you please."

842 If there are not to be children immediately, the woman takes [825] a preventive: she roasts a certain snail, places the juice of it [824] in the morning dew, and drinks it very early in the morning. For the same purpose, she can also eat a certain small forest-fruit, which smells like the abacaxy (therefore like a pineapple), but only when it is ripe.

578 Formerly there were no quarrels between man and man, man 178 and woman, or woman and woman because of jealousy; today they do occur.

461 There are women who are lazy. Then the man does her work. But there are also men who are lazy and have their work done by the woman.

115 I have my informant, who first was called Kalapití and later [126] Nakilí, to thank for a few texts of myths which I surely could [114] not have learned from any other Tereno. I shall publish them at another place. I also have him to thank for the information concerning the succession of the chiefs, which without doubt no other Tereno could have given me so thoroughly and completely. For